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TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

* General Assembly concludes special commemorative meeting after adopting Declaration urging redirection of United Nations to greater service to humankind.

* Development is new name for peace, President of Guatemala tells General Assembly.

* President of China says countries must be allowed to choose their own social systems without interference by others.

* Maintenance of peace is supreme goal of United Nations, Bosnian President states.

* Chairman of Liberian Council of State says affluent countries must act to establish new economic order for benefit of all.

* Mankind must never again witness horrors of genocide or ethnic cleansing, President of Rwanda stresses.

* Prime Minister of Pakistan says principles of equal rights and self-determination lie at heart of Charter.

* Israel is committed to bringing peace to entire Middle East region, Prime Minister says.

* Amir of Kuwait says global confidence in United Nations is rising, but limitations must be recognized.

* Haitian President says United Nations helped bring about political miracle in restoring democracy to Haiti.

* Unipolar world has left mechanisms of United Nations at service of narrow self-interest, Vice-President of Iraq says.

* Prime Minister of Sweden says unwillingness of some Members to pay United Nations dues reflects crisis in multilateralism.

* Developing countries must be adequately represented in Security Council, Indian Prime Minister states.

* Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and Grenadines says regions with proven economic potential should have Security Council seat.

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The General Assembly today concluded its series of special meetings commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations by urging a redirection of the Organization to greater service to humankind, especially to those who were suffering and were deeply deprived. It took that action by adopting, by acclamation, a six-part Declaration 50 years after the United Nations Charter entered into force.

By the provisions of the Declaration, Member States and observers reaffirmed the purposes and principles of the Charter and their commitments to them. They stated their determination that the United Nations of the future would work with renewed vigour and effectiveness in promoting peace, development, equality and justice and understanding among the peoples of the world. They also pledged to give to the twenty-first century a United Nations equipped, financed and structured to serve effectively the peoples in whose name it had been established.

The preamble to the Declaration stated that the United Nations had been born out of the sufferings caused by the Second World War. The determination, enshrined in the Charter, to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war was as vital today as it had been 50 years ago. It gave expression to the common values and aspirations of humankind.

In his closing statement, Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali said the success of the special commemorative meeting showed that the United Nations had the support of the citizens of the world and their leaders. He paid tribute to all who had made the extraordinary event possible, including the Preparatory Committee and the United Nations staff.

General Assembly President Diogo Freitas do Amaral (Portugal) expressed great satisfaction at the success of the meeting. There could be no greater testimony to the worth of the United Nations than that given by the presence of so many world leaders in New York. It was now time to face the urgent financial crisis and lay the foundations of a strong, efficient and visionary Organization for the future.

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President Ramiro de Leon Carpio of Guatemala told the General Assembly today that universal representation should prevail at the United Nations, without any kind of exclusion. Peace was not just the absence of war, it also had economic and social components. Development was the new name for peace. The least developed countries sought merely to compete under fair conditions. Their products should have access to markets, without being subject to unjustifiable objections or classifications. It would never be possible to bring peace unless the national policies of the most powerful

countries were promptly transformed to allow poor countries to attain true independence and the sovereign equality to which they were fully entitled.

Institutional legality and democracy had been strengthened in Guatemala, the President continued. Through the democratic process corrupt members of Congress and the Supreme Court had been removed from office. Guatemalans had suffered from an internal conflict that raged for 35 years. For that reason, Guatemala appealed to the international community to support the ongoing peace process with the open hand of solidarity in the political and economic fields. The guns must fall silent.

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President Jiang Zemin of China said that by relying on its Member States, the United Nations had done much to mitigate regional conflicts, eradicate colonialism, expedite arms reduction and promote peace, cooperation and development. Given its role in the world, no other international organization or country bloc could substitute for it. As history moved forward, any country that sought hegemony was doomed to failure. There should be no attempts to make up excuses for interfering in the internal affairs of other countries. They should be allowed to pursue the social systems that they chose for themselves. The principles of mutual respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and non-aggression should be observed.

As a member of the international community, China could not stand separate from the rest of the world, the President went on to say. Even as it became stronger and more developed it would not seek hegemony or threaten anyone. It would help to maintain international peace and stability. There was only one China in the world and Taiwan was an inalienable part of Chinese territory, he stressed. The peaceful reunification of the two sides of the Taiwan straits was sought by the entire Chinese people, including those in Taiwan. The Chinese people had the ability, the resourcefulness and confidence to overcome any interference and make the reunification of their motherland a reality.

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President Alija Izetbegovic of Bosnia and Herzegovina said the United Nations had always been a source of hope, but also a constant cause of disappointment. He stressed that the supreme goal was the maintenance of peace. The Organization had succeeded in preventing global conflict, but it had proved less effective in stopping local conflicts. The United Nations had acted effectively in stopping the Gulf crisis, but had not been as successful in dealing with the aggression against Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The Bosnian people approached the upcoming peace talks with the best of faith and plenty of hope, the President continued. They had not started the war, and although they were winning, they did not dream of being victors of

war. They had always worked towards peace and wanted to be victors in peace. The Bosnian people wanted to create a society based on political and ethnic pluralism, respect for human rights, and private enterprise. The Bosnian Government and Army would not accept the division of their country, in whatever packaging it might be served. The division of Bosnia and Herzegovina would lead to the continuation of war, sooner or later, he warned.

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Wilton Sankawulo, Chairman of the Council of State of the Liberian National Transitional Government, expressed the hope that the nations of the world, especially the affluent ones, would act to establish a new economic order that would improve the quality of life for all peoples. Not doing so would be an act of non-compliance with the United Nations Charter, which mandated the use of international machinery to promote the economic and social advancement of all nations. The Secretary-General's Agenda for Peace and Agenda for Development provided a framework for implementing the principles contained in the Charter.

Liberia supported the international call for reform in the restructuring of the United Nations, he said. "This vital institution must continue evolving and growing in an enlightened fashion, but always within the limits of the principles enshrined in the Charter." He appealed to Member States to help end the Liberian conflict by supporting the disarmament and demobilization of fighters; the repatriation of displaced persons and refugees; and the social and economic reconstruction of the nation. He hoped that all Member States would make substantial pledges at the conference on Liberia to be held on 27 October.

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The President of Rwanda, Pasteur Bizimungu, said the proclamation of the noble objectives of the United Nations and their implementation reflected double standards on many occasions. Even though the Charter stipulated the self-determination and sovereignty of nations, colonized peoples often had to resort to armed struggle to restore their freedom. After independence, the dominant Powers maintained their influence on many new States. Such independence was a sham, in which the strategy of divide and rule was still applied and the relationship was still that of dominator and dominated.

The horrendous genocide that took place in Rwanda last year was a direct consequence of such factors, the President continued. Colonialism introduced racist theories and initiated discrimination in Rwanda. The first ethnic massacre engineered by the authorities occurred in 1959 while the country was still under colonial rule. Were it not for external influences intended to divide them, Rwandans would easily resolve their problems. However, the planners of genocide were welcomed in some capitals as heroes. They were being re-armed while they prevented refugees from returning home. "This is

not only a violation of international conventions, but also reflects moral decay." He went on to say that mankind should never again witness the horrors of genocide or ethnic cleansing.

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Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto of Pakistan said the principles of equal rights and self-determination lay at the heart of the United Nations Charter. Millions in Asia owed their freedom to the pursuit of those noble ideals. There had been no global conflict in the last 50 years and that noble achievement was being celebrated today. She applauded the Organization's humanitarian work and peace-keeping interventions, to which Pakistan's sons had contributed with their blood. She also welcomed United Nations efforts to focus on social development and women.

The Secretary-General had described the Kashmir dispute as one of the oldest items on the United Nations agenda, the Prime Minister continued. Forty-eight years of occupation had not crushed the spirit of a noble people committed to the right to self-determination and the ideals of the United Nations. Those people were placing their hopes in the Organization's promise to hold a plebiscite to determine their future. "Do not close your hearts, your minds and your ears to the torment of Kashmir."

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Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin of Israel said the United Nations existed in order to realize the words of the prophet Isiah: "They shall beat their swords into ploughshares, and their spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more." He stressed that he was speaking as a representative of the entire Jewish people, including those for whom the creation of the United Nations had come too late -- the six million Jews whose lives had been turned into ashes. "We will never let them be forgotten."

The Jewish people would not forget their benefactors in the United Nations who had given them the opportunity for independence 48 years ago, the Prime Minister continued. However, hurtful and unjust decisions had also been taken in the General Assembly Hall, including the resolution equating Zionism with racism. "Many ideologies and revolutions have failed and faded away. But it is Zionism which brought the Jewish people to its historic homeland. Zionism succeeded." He expressed gratitude for the Organization's support for the Middle East peace process. "The road is still long -- we still have a long way to go. However, I can promise you that we are determined to continue until we have brought peace to the entire region."

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The Amir of Kuwait, Sheik Jaber Al-Ahmad Al-Jaber Al-Sabah, acknowledged the vital role played by the United Nations in backing his country in the face of aggression. He also expressed the hope that such support would continue until the relevant Security Council resolutions had been implemented in full. Global confidence in the United Nations was rising, and he trusted that the Organization would become even more effective in confronting mankind's problems in the next century. That would consolidate the values of benevolence, cooperation and interdependence for the benefit of all human beings.

"At the same time, we have to be realistic and recognize that the United Nations is not and cannot be a miracle worker," the Amir went on to say. In order to appreciate the Organization's immense achievements, it was necessary to make a fair and balanced review not only of its political performance, but also of its delivery in the areas of development, culture, social affairs and health. He highlighted the work done by specialized agencies on behalf of developing countries. Kuwait recognized its share of responsibility for furthering the goals of the Organization, and reaffirmed its commitment to the principles enshrined in the Charter.

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The President of Haiti, Jean-Bertrand Aristide, said the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations had a special significance for his country -- it was also an occasion for Haitians to celebrate the first anniversary of the return of democracy. A political miracle had occurred on 15 October 1994 thanks to the courage of the Haitian people, the leadership of the United States President, the contribution of the Secretary-General and the assistance of the entire United Nations. Peace had been reestablished, the economy was growing and people were being educated.

By the year 2050, the world's population would have increased to 10 billion, the President continued. It was necessary to prepare a better world for those people at the end of the millennium. By doing so, the United Nations would surround itself with glory, pride and peace.

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The Vice-President of Iraq, Taha Marouf, said the United Nations had achieved some memorable successes, including eradicating colonialism, assisting liberation movements and laying the foundations for international law. However, the cold war had cast a shadow over the Organization. In the last five years, the world had had to adopt to a unipolar world. That had given rise to double standards which put the mechanisms of the United Nations at the service of narrow self-interest. Sanctions had been applied on the

basis of an extreme interpretation of the Charter, depriving people of their basic human rights.

The comprehensive sanctions against Iraq had resulted in thousands of deaths due to lack of food and medicine, the Vice-President went on to say. It was now necessary to enhance the democratic process within the United Nations and to enforce mechanisms for the political settlement of disputes. It was also necessary to reform the Security Council and its working methods to enable it to respond to the interests of the overwhelming majority of States.

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The Prime Minister of Sweden, Ingvar Carlsson, said his Government sought radical reform of the governance and financing of the multilateral system. "But we will never allow reform to become a fig-leaf for cut-downs and cop-outs." The necessary changes would not come about by themselves. There was a need for a mechanism, a process which would allow for a thorough discussion of all constructive ideas and proposals that had come up, inside and outside the Organization.

Nowhere was the crisis in multilateralism more apparent than in the unwillingness of some Member States to contribute, the Prime Minister stressed. "They want more and more from our common Organization. Yet, these countries are not willing to pay their membership fees. That is simply not acceptable." The time had come to seriously discuss alternative methods of financing the United Nations system, including the possibilities of an international tax on foreign currency transactions and of introducing charges for the use of common global resources, such as sea-lanes or ocean fishing areas.

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The Prime Minister of India, P.V. Narasimha Rao, said that critics of the United Nations concentrated upon its failures. However, on an objective appraisal, the Organization remained humankind's beacon of hope. If its relevance was to continue, the root causes of humankind's afflictions must be addressed: nuclear weapons; poverty and under-development; international terrorism; and fundamentalist trends based on exclusivism and intolerance.

The United Nations now included many more independent, sovereign States than 50 years ago, the Prime Minister noted. In such a context, it could not afford to be seen as either exclusivist or incomplete, either in appearance or outlook. In particular, developing countries should have an adequate presence in the Security Council based on objective criteria. All nations must feel that their stakes in global peace and prosperity were factored into the Organization's decision-making.

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The Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Sir James Fitz-Allen Mitchell, stressed that the United Nations should not be only a place for the wealthy. All regions should be recognized, including Africa, Latin America and the Caribbean, although countries should be able to secure a place on an individual basis. Evolving regions which had demonstrated their economic potential should, among themselves, have a permanent seat in the Security Council.

The celebration of the Organization's fiftieth anniversary would not have been so worthy a cause if the evils of communism had not been put to rest, the Prime Minister went on to say. "We still await atonement by those who imposed such monumental waste on our civilization." As the birth place of Christianity, Judaism and the Muslim faith, Jerusalem should become an international city under the umbrella of the United Nations. "I see this as a way to peace among the believers. I see this as an idea to erode the terrorism that haunts much of our everyday life around the world."

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